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successful in preventing the oppressions it was designed to guard against, it has succeeded in little more than this; and that an ideal representative government, which is the best medium between autocracy and democracy, seems scarcely workable among the American people to-day.

All this may be granted. But what is the conclusion? What guidance for future thinking, not to say future action, can we derive from Mr. Ireland's extraordinary synthesis of criticisms—biological and other—upon the current ideas? In the first place, of course, we must adhere as closely as possible to the representative principle, have minds of our own, and oppose the initiative, referendum, and recall. In the second place, we must get ready to advance along three new lines. These are, (1) the science of eugenics, (2) a new science of government based on psychological principles, and (3) a limitation of the suffrage.

Just here one finds obstacles. If eugenics and scientific government are imposed upon us—through the control or leadership of the few, of course—are we not going to incur some of those very evils which democracy aims to prevent? For the solid core of truth in democracy is just this: that while leadership must be with the few, the few are never to be trusted not to oppress when they have the power to do so. We are blameworthy in our general disregard of the expert; but God help us if the experts rule us! Indeed, Mr. Ireland's programme—if such it may be called—seems to require, for its acceptance and for its wise and just application, exactly that higher level of character and intelligence which he says does not exist in our present democracy.

It would appear, then, that we must muddle along, making the best of the kind of government that we have and resisting disruptive influences as well as our present level of intelligence and character permits, until some unforeseen change occurs or until some superior power intervenes. When the requisite stage of evolution is reached, then the complete programme of eugenics and scientific government will be forthcoming, and then, no doubt, there will be no difficulty about its application.

Mr. Ireland's criticism is broad in its scope, and it is of the kind that promises well because it draws ideas from many different sources; but it hardly aims to be more than thought-provoking.

THE POEMS OF HENRY VAN DYKE: A New and Revised Edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Perhaps no American man of letters since Longfellow has produced a larger amount of really commendable, uniformly good, and well finished verse than has come from the practised pen of that admirable scholar and writer, Dr. Henry Van Dyke. It is of Longfellow that one thinks as one reads these highly literary poems, by no means lacking in "soul". The broad culture, the cordial tone, the simplicity of heart, the purity of feeling, are all there—with now and then a touch of felicity in expression or a hint of originality in thought

that almost claims inspiration. Is there in all this anything to command the attention of those who think, and whose thought is stimulated and sustained by the form of poetry and by its power of expressing insight?

Certainly, there is in Dr. Van Dyke's work nothing of the intense personality, the assertion of fact, the challenging note of modern poetry generally. It would have created no surprise if it had been published fifty years ago. In many ways, the difference is all in Dr. Van Dyke's favor. He is not afraid of being too well understood. He does not imply that if you do not understand him, so much the worse for you. He takes pains to be clear, and if he intends to venture beyond the common circle of thought, he is careful to prepare his readers for the venture. He is in this respect old-fashioned. Yet an old-fashioned method is not necessarily a bad one—nor an easy one. If it were easy, more would resort to it. No: the evidence all seems to show that the method of free verse and saying what *you* personally please, whatever it may be in its upper ranges, is, in its middle, or school-girl estate, by far the easier. And may one say, without suspicion of scoffing, that the union of a ripe and cultivated understanding with a certain human instinct and with real simplicity of heart is of singular value, even though it does not amount to genius?

But as for commanding power, or even notable vigor, one has to say frankly that one does not find it. The insight expressed in Dr. Van Dyke's poetry is, for the most part, just the insight of all of us in our pensive moments, a little developed and clarified.

How long the echoes love to play
Around the shore of silence, as a wave
Retreating circles down the sand

. . .

So in the heart
When, fading slowly down the past
Fond memories depart . . .

Yes, Holmes, or even Wordsworth, need not have been ashamed of this conceit, or of the expression; yet the idea, familiar enough and belonging somehow rather to a passing manner of thought than to the ages, seems not to have been waiting for just these words. Rather, a familiar emotion is set forth in comely garb, leaving a momentary impression of pleasure in the fitting adornment of our all too human conceptions—nothing more.

Both the strength and the weakness of Dr. Van Dyke's poetry appear to be suggested by the fact that he can tell simple tales in verse much better than verse can generally be made to tell them. Who can resist such a beginning as—

In robes of Tyrian blue the king was drest
A jewelled collar shone upon his breast. . . .

Faith in the value of the poetic message, an endowment none too common, enables the poet to appeal simply and naturally to what is childlike in his readers.